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L E T T E R
T O
S I R T. C. B U N B U R Y, B A R T.
O N E O F T H E M E M B E R S O F P A R L I A M E N T
F O R T H E C O U N T Y O F S U F F O L K,
O N T H E
P O O R R A T E S,
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H I G H P R I C E O F P R O V I S I O N S.
W I T H
S O M E P R O P O S A L S F O R R E D U C I N G B O T H.

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B Y A S U F F O L K G E N T L E M A N.  
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I P S W I C H:

P R I N T E D A N D S O L D B Y G. J E R M Y N, B O O K S E L L E R.

S O L D A L S O B Y M E S S R S. R I V I N G T O N S, S T. P A U L ' S C H U R C H - Y A R D; A N D
D E B R E T T, P I C C A D I L L Y, L O N D O N; G E D G E, A N D R A C K H A M,
B U R Y; L O D E R, W O O D E R I D G E; B U R R E L L, N E W M A R K E T;
A N D K E Y M E R; C O L C H E S T E R. 1795.

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[ *P r i c e O n e S h i l l i n g .* ]

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Peyton



A

L E T T E R,

&c.

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SIR,

AS on several occasions you have shewn your zeal in forwarding plans for the general welfare, I make no scruple to offer my mite to your consideration. I am to treat of an evil grown to a gigantic size; the remedy requires a proportionate capacity, to which no single one has yet been adequate : but in many things which have seemed almost vain to oppose, it has been found, that the chief perplexity has been to break the surface, by which means, instruments were introduced that in the end subdued every difficulty : and thus my Scheme which is but as a Foetus, may become a complete and perfect Body, by assistance from the wisdom of others, which its good intentions may allure.

It

It is to your benevolence, that the Husbandman is indebted for the ease he enjoys from Statute Labour, which you considered as extending *la Corvée* to this Country, the most oppressive Tax in France; to make a poor Man pay for using the Earth to walk upon, is only one step from the Sublime in Despotism, "a Tax for Breathing the Air," *pro Haustu Aëris*, which Tyranny according to Mr. Gibbon, was exercised in the Lower Empire.

I shall take a slight survey of what appears to me to have occasioned the vast increase in the poor rates, in the Villages, since the Revolution; at that time there existed a race of Men in the Country, besides the Gentlemen and Husbandmen, called Yeomanry, Men who cultivated their own property, consisting chiefly of Farms from forty to fourscore pounds a year; these families had long been considered as the pride of the nation in war and peace; the men were hardy, brave, and of good morals; by the influx of riches and a change of manners, they were nearly annihilated in the year 1750, and are now but faintly remembered.

I know a Village in Gloucestershire consisting of an hundred houses, which in the memory of a man now living, had but Three tenants in the parish, which is of great extent; every man lived upon, and farmed his own lands: of great  
and



and small Land-owners they might be about Sixty, and now they are comprized in Seven.

By the change of these men into husbandmen, it may easily be conceived, that their minds took a cast not favourable to their morals; home became irksome, which of course many left, and many returned in poverty and wretchedness; then perhaps it was first found necessary to make a rate, which the charitable bequests in former times, had been in many places sufficient to prevent.

It is very likely that the family of a labouring man, was then maintained at half the expence it is now; milk the most nutritious food for their children, was then cheap and plentiful; rye flour furnished their bread in great measure; beer came then to hand at an easy rate, which is now exchanged for raw spirits, or water; by the junction of *small* Farms to compose a *large* one, many were deprived of milk for their families, and in a series of time, by the increase of the price of provisions above that of labour, they are now in a situation, I shall have occasion to enlarge upon; but the most tremendous effects with regard to the Poor-rates are to be found in great Towns, I shall point out some of the causes, but shall confine what I may have to propose as a remedy, to the Country only.

The

The first great increase seems to have been from 1730 to 1745, within that time the French by their connection with Spain, had wormed us out of the woollen trade with that country; we had been long used to make coarse woollen goods in black and white, which was the chief cloathing of the Country, particularly of the women; we made them also a finer sort, for the use of the religious orders of both sexes. The loss of this trade fell heavy upon several parts of England; particularly in the North, in Devonshire, and in Essex and Suffolk, some Towns were ruined; but this was followed about the year 1756, by effects still more sensibly felt.

When the Duke of Braganza mounted the Throne of Portugal, that Country broke its alliance with France and united with England, and by a treaty concluded with Sir Paul Methuen, they soon became as in a state of pupillage, all their interests were guided by this Country; in about thirty years we had so cajoled them, that we furnished them with Food, Cloaths, Materials for Building, Hard-ware, and all the Luxuries of Life; we received their raw materials, which we sold again to them manufactured; we furnished them with Ships and Naval Stores, and in fine we sold them every thing but Sunshiné and Sleep; we had the Trade of their Colonies in the Brasils,

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with a degree of advantage, exceeding every other commercial calculation.

The Earthquake at Lisbon in 1755\*, roused them from their torpid state, in the Conde d'Oyeras they found a patriot Minister, this man assumed the national Rights, and by his conduct soon shew, that its minority was at an end.

For many years before 1760, we had scarcely any but Portugal gold in currency, we traded with our Guineas for Silver to carry to the East Indies; almost every person could then tell how many Mille Rees§ were in a Guinea, and for more than twenty-five years past, there has not been one Portugal piece of Gold in currency, to conduct a man to that information.

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\* In 1755, the Portuguese emancipated the Brasilians, over whom they had exercised for several years, the most severe despotism; a Country of 1200 Leagues from N. to S. upon that Coast, and from E. to W. more, in some parts towards the River of the Amazons. This was the most eminent piece of Humanity, that had been ever exercised by any Prince, and yet in the middle of the eighteenth Century, the Age of Light and Philosophy, when the cause of Liberty was in every Man's mouth, it was neither perceived or noticed; and I now mention it, as a Circumstance, very little known.

§ The number of Mille or thousand Rees, was marked on every piece of Gold. Mille Rees is no coin, but a mode of Numeration, like our Pound sterling.

It is supposed that our Trade with Portugal at the time I have mentioned, employed a million of our people, as Manufacturers, Artisans and Cultivators, yet as this deficiency took place chiefly after 1755, when we were engaged in war, it was little noticed, and the great increase of our commerce since, in America, and on the Continent of Europe, has made it imperceptible to the public eye, but this has not prevented the lurking evil.

Nothing can exhibit better proof of the vanity of the designs and measures of man, in his greatest enterprizes, in his deep researches, and in the use he makes of his great discoveries, than is seen in the management of the Portuguese Government; for the most ruinous monopolies have since been granted, both at home, and in the Colonies, so that they have never been the better for the change they made.

When a Town employed in a Manufactory is deprived of it, the inhabitants are as if struck with a palsy, and become instantly a rent-charge upon the Parish; but the mischief does not die with that generation, for their nestlings being brought up in sloth and idleness, who in their youth contrive barely to exist, marry and beget children, and then without shame resort to their old connection with the parish workhouse; a little inquiry will soon teach any one how hard it is to detach the  
second

second generation from their family habits ; \* if in the country a man by accident is incapable of following the Plough, he can stand to Hedge and Ditch, and can wield the Flail, but the Weaver can turn his hand to nothing. From the events I have noticed, I think the great increase of the poor rates in great Towns may be dated : I shall again resume my observations on the Villagers.

The constant influx of riches from the national commerce, has long lulled to rest the minds of all who are ready to embrace every palliation of evil, that produces present ease, rather than encounter a change that may be incommodious, however salutary ; and so general has been this opinion, that it has been a kind of religious faith to believe, that the good effects from commerce would rectify every mistake, and be such a pillar of national support that no calamity could shake ; but it is now sufficiently manifested, that riches in some situations may be so far from being a counterbalance to evils, that their influence may increase them.

The riches of a country do not consist in the great possessions of some individuals, but in the content and welfare of the whole community ; as that is found to be diffused, there is seen good order,

\* In Essex and Suffolk there are Towns, in which the Poor Rates have often exceeded fifteen Shillings in the Pound.



der, by which standard its consequence is graduated, with respect to its force, when compared with any other Country. In the general intercourse of nations as the world now goes, the greatest benefit is to be derived from Industry, as far as that can be extended, by the encouragement of Government, its resources may be depended upon as secure and permanent, and all other speculations are vain and illusory, into whatever Region of the Earth they may be carried.

Every one may observe that the Manufacturing people owing to the incitements from Commerce since the Revolution, has attained the extreme heights of Industry without example, if Holland be excepted ; for there perhaps, a greater application to labour in all its branches may be found, attended with a sordid parsimony, which has produced a pride, in some respects useful to the cause of General Freedom, though tainted with the want of friendship to a strict subordination ; whilst the pursuits of the Industrious in this country has been, that themselves, and children, might enjoy the fruits of their labour, rather than to save ; which in general has carried with it, a sense of subordination for the higher powers ; for in the refractory proceedings excited by some present evils that pressed upon the people, there has been no appearance of that invidious and wicked disposition, of setting themselves equal with those, who

who for the common good of society are naturally placed above them: the different dispositions of the two nations may be accounted for, as proceeding partly from a physical cause, but more from the operations of the two forms of Government.

But where it happens that the best determined disposition to labour shall fail to produce the same comforts which formerly used to accompany it, and men sit quietly down under the disappointment, it may be considered as a good omen, for the peace and good order of the country,\* however disagreeable in other respects. But if it goes so far that the father of a family must daily feel the misery of retrenching his own wants, that his children may have enough to eat, the time is come, that a remedy must be applied; and every wise man will agree, that it should be the spontaneous office of the higher orders, springing from kindness and good will, rather than the sufferers should be driven to their untoward means of doing themselves justice.

Concerning the poor rates, I have to observe that the amount of the money raised for the main-

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tenance

\* Any observing person of fifty years of age, who has lived in the Country, may recollect to have seen that a small piece of bacon or cheese, and a bottle of beer accompanied the hedger and ditcher, who now eats his dry bread, and drinks at the spring.

tenance of the poor is astonishing; it exceeds a sum which in several periods of time within the two last past centuries would have been considered as the fund of a war establishment, for the defence of the honour and the welfare of the nation; yet of late years, it has swelled annually and unaccountably; and if what is given in secrecy, by the charitable and well disposed, were added to it, the sum would appear more than sufficient for the full maintenance of every object of commiseration; and yet common beggars are frequent, and families in the parishes where some of the greatest amounts are paid, are full of wretchedness and misery.

Some persons of great abilities have endeavoured to hit upon means that should root out this evil, but have fallen short; till at length it has settled into a despair of finding any thing adequate to the purpose. Irregularities in Government, are frequently neglected like this, till ALL feel the inconvenience, which is generally the first spring of action, to find the remedy; that which is not subjected to the management of some particular person, or persons, will necessarily be unnoticed, or in familiar language, that which is every one's business, is no one's.

The feastings and other bad management of parish officers were a standing jest, till in the end, the mischief attracted the notice of men of more consequence in cities and great towns, so far, as to place

place it in better hands, but yet, strange to tell, the increase of the poor rates has been constant; this weed instead of withering under the caution of the wise and honest, has taken so firm a root, that it seems to defy all art to destroy it.

It is not to be imagined that the operations of sixty years indolence and carelessness, should be done away easily, for reformation is a plant of slow growth; this ought not however to discourage us from using our best endeavours, for we may possibly restore things sooner than we expect. The exertion of the good will of a wise and great people is so seldom seen in the pursuit of one object, that it excludes all human calculation, from finding out the force of its effects.

It is not easy to enumerate all the causes that have produced this complication of ills, which belong to the subject in question, but I shall mention one, as very necessary to be attended to, and to which I would apply instantaneous relief, as far as it can be. It is very easy to prove that the husbandman has not of late years been paid for his labour, in proportion to that of the manufacturer, or of any other poor men employed in populous towns, nor indeed proportionally to his natural wants; so that his family must consequently become chargeable to the parish, through the accidents of human life.

It is a political maxim, in all commercial states particularly, that bread should be brought to every mouth at the cheapest price possible, because it is intimately connected with the profits of foreign trade: from this cause, the class of men who render us the most signal service, have unluckily been overlooked.

I am aware that in parishes, where gentlemen and a clergyman reside, the husbandman and his family taste of many kindnesses, their wants are not only supplied, but often anticipated; their wages have been raised, a higher price has been paid for task work, and corn sold to them at the moderate rate of five or six shillings a bushel; and to the honour of many farmers let it be remembered, that they have often cheerfully adopted this benevolence of disposition, by furnishing their own labourers at this reduced price of corn; but we must nevertheless confess that in the great extent of this kingdom, many villages are much neglected through the want of a Gentleman of generous character, and the consolation of a worthy, resident Pastor: it is often their misfortune to be consigned over to the occupiers of land, who, from their own poverty or avarice are unable, or unwilling, and the poor cultivators are hardly dealt by; in some places the wages which were given fifty years ago, have been scarcely increased, and are  
much



much inadequate to the wants of a man, his wife, and only three children.

The manufacturers can associate, and, by a combination of their mental faculties, sharpen their understandings, so as to be an overmatch for their employers, and compel them to attend to ill founded complaints, and even to support them in their unreasonable demands, in debauchery and neglect of work; whilst the poor sequestered husbandman who may chance to be in the power of a hard hearted task-master, must quietly submit to eat the bread he earns in sorrow; the manufacturer with three days work, in many trades in England, can earn enough to pass the remainder of the week in sloth and idleness.

The resource left to us in our present situation is to awaken the families of the husbandmen, to industry; the only stimulus, is reward: by a proper application of that, the great burden of the poor rates will soon be made lighter.

We all know that the children of the poor in the country ought to be early trained to the habits of industry, as the only and sure means of producing health and content to themselves, good order in the state, and a benefit to the community at large: these are benefits which inevitably attend on industry. Those Philosophers who insist that Nature has been too sparing of that quality of the mind which should induce us to relish labour, must

must however allow, that she does not refuse the reward for the attainment of it : the cheerfulness of temper which accompanies an industrious occupation, produces sensations which indolence can never furnish, even with the assistance of riches : let us avail ourselves therefore of all such things as will forward our designs, which are safe, easy, and pleasant to practice.

When the Wool-Dealers by the accidents belonging to trade, are constrained to reduce the price of Spinning, that industry may not languish and die, the deficiency should be made up by the parish purse ; for it is dangerous to let the poor sit idle under the opinion that it is not worth while to work. One question will solve this problem ; Is it not better that the parish should pay money for their work, rather than maintain them in idleness ? besides it is ungenerous to cast the burden of trade upon those who taste none of its profits ; a maintenance they must have, which they should be encouraged to earn ; the fruits of their employment is a good to the community at large, and this ought not to be lost for want of a proper inducement : it will be necessary to furnish them with spinning wheels, and all other implements that are required.

Some may say, and so we are to pay money to enrich the wool-dealers ! I say yes ; but you cannot do this, without enriching yourselves, and the whole

whole community, which should certainly recommend the measure. In Counties where Wool is not prepared for the Weaver, the spinning of hemp, and flax threads, knitting stockings, and night-caps, in cotton, thread and worsted might be introduced, and a variety of other employments, the produce of which would find a ready and profitable sale.

But who is to put this wonderful machine in motion, that shall produce these small manufactures? to this pertinent question, my answer is, that it is the duty of all to assist the State, in all ways; that those who by their fortunes, education, and good sense, are able to do the most good, should be the most in request to set this on foot, together with other necessary measures; by their interference, the power of fashion, which masters every difficulty may be engaged in it; the Clergyman of the parish, is a prominent feature, it were invidious to overlook, or to suspect that he would not heartily co-operate in a business so strictly connected with his Duty and Profession.

Gentlemen who reside in the country will of course be ready to give their advice and assistance, and those who reside at a distance from their estates, may by some small gratuity forward these designs. I propose, that where the number of the poor requires it, there shall be an Overseer *in word*, and *in deed*, who shall be paid to attend strictly to the business

business of forwarding, whatever is given in charge to him; we have seen enough of leaving these things to nominal overseers, to chance and accident. In almost every parish that will require it, a person may be found to carry it through, for a small stipend. There is a town in Suffolk where a person is paid for looking after the streets, the consequence is, that in a few years it is become, out of all comparison, the cleanest town in Europe.

There are some circumstances, in society where a man may dislike to appear personally, in the business of the public, it may affect his private interests; the person employed should be paid. It is vain to expect that the generality of men should incline to serve the public, without the spur of reward.

If it be true, as I fear it is, that the best disposed mind, assisted by a strong constitution, cannot provide a husbandman, his wife and children, with such comforts as belong to those of the other low stations, whilst he is young and vigorous, what can prevent him from being burthensome to the parish in sickness and in age?

The kind influence of the legislature to relieve the wants of the humble-minded men, who have been so long overlooked, will operate like a charm; their patient resignation will rise into action that will make them forget the past; the benefits held out to the coming generation, will give them better spirits, and better morals.

I propose, to make the husbandman happier, to increase the plenty of the markets, to reduce the prices of many commodities constantly sold there and to lower the poor rates.

Suppose that every owner of land to the amount of one hundred pounds per annum, lying within three miles of all populous market towns, should be engaged to build a cottage, which might cost about fourscore pounds, consisting of a keeping room, back kitchen and pantry, with two bedrooms over; and should set out at least one acre of land, adjoining, or as near to the same as may be, for which he should be paid a rent, equal to what the farmer pays for the rest of the piece of land; \* it will be found that in proportion to the number of cottagers of this description, will be the increase for sale of most of the small articles, which are necessary to all housekeepers; namely, pork, pickled pork and bacon, ducks, fowls, chickens, eggs, potatoes, and garden

\* The inducement to bring the Land owners to do this, must be left to further consideration, a Law, with an encouragement from Government may be thought of: I shall at present only insist on the certainty, that such effects as I point out, would infallibly follow the measure I propose: that a Cottager shall pay a rent equal to the building of a house of fourscore pounds value, is more than I think, can well be complied with; but I depend on assistance from Government.



den stuff of all kinds ; apples, pears, plumbs, filberts and other fruits, bees-wax and honey ; I insist much upon bees, which bring a certain profit, with the least trouble imaginable, besides they are emblematic of the benefits of industry.

This quantity of land would occupy the husbandman, when he could get no work from the farmer ; would be the sure means of support to his family, and leave a small surplus at the years end ; for two-thirds of the profit of an acre of land would be added to his income : the owner would have the pleasing gratification of seeing the children of the cottage, strong, clean, and healthy, and the whole community reaping the benefit of his benevolence, without taking any thing from his purse ; instead of the rags, and squalid misery that now so frequently presents itself.

These cottagers would be competitors for the same of selling on reasonable terms ; whereas the business of markets in great towns, is now in the hands of few, except such as are regraters and forestallers, who are able, by a combination well understood in these days, to enhance the price of every thing : but these forestallers, regraters, badgers, or by whatever name they are known, are, in spite of all the laws to prevent their practices become useful, and even necessary in large and populous cities, insomuch that without their interference, things would really be worse than they are ;

are. Who does not see, that the numerous inhabitants of London must disperse, if they were not protected from a precarious supply of provisions, by an army of these pick-pockets? but when a State submits to measures, evidently of an evil tendency, through neglect and supineness, it verges to that period, which must bring on labour and sorrow.

These cottagers would carry every thing to market that would bring a profit, however small, whilst the engrossers, think only of supplying the wealthy, with the most advantage to themselves.

It has often been urged, and with every appearance of reason, that the annihilation of the small farms, hath done more to enhance the price of provisions, and have hurt the poor, more than could have arisen from any other circumstance; but it must be owned, that it is only one of many evils, that naturally attach themselves to the increase of riches, from a hasty and superabundant commerce.

When riches began to be generally diffused, it is no wonder that the appetite of all, to possess them in the quickest manner, should be whetted; hence the avarice of the land-owner and the farmer became reciprocal; the landlord blinded by the constant augmentation of his income, was easily led to stretch it further; and listened to get quit of the expences, which the repairs of his farm houses and buildings brought upon him;  
this

this was a regular and gradual process, which prevented his finding out, that he was amused, with a seeming acquisition of wealth only ; that he was receiving a larger portion than formerly in one hand, which his increase of necessities obliged him to dispense with the other ; and in truth, that he was more remote from the means of raising his family into eminence, by the management of his estate, than before. The grandson of a man, whose estate was formerly four hundred pounds a year, who now receives double that sum, is as I have said, no richer than his predecessor ; however it is but fair to allow, that his mode of living is of a more splendid and seducing kind ; the influence of the change, was imperceptible, and of course irresistible to meer mortal man ; the dress and manners of all orders of men have given way, to the same impulse upon the minds of all, so that there is but one colour and description of character, and so long as it lasts, it is a gayer world.

It may appear to some that the remedy is obvious, it is but to revert to the old measures that produced such different effects ; this is to suppose that the farms can be again divided, or in other words, that the land-owners have saved enough to rebuild those houses, barns and buildings which have been taken down, and would be again requisite for such a change ; but perhaps in a course of time, something like it may grow out of this plan.

That

That some cottagers will be careful and saving, so as to lay up a little, is naturally to be expected, and that such men may recommend themselves to their landlords, and at the end of the farmer's lease, a little more land may be added; he that would not erect many buildings, may add a cow-house or small dairy to a cottage, and then the old system may again come about, and a healthy race of Yeomanry may be seen once more in England; but I allot a short series of time to the supplying the markets more plentifully, with the articles I have mentioned; five years will do the business, every year from the first, producing largely the certain means of completion.

The progression from bad to worse is difficult to divert, because of the intervention of various things out of human foresight; but on the other hand, we have this to encourage us, that in the extreme of moral or physical ills, we know that most of them will yield, and be brought into order by the strenuous exertions of virtue.

To some, the favourers of this measure may appear to be a little airy in their speculations, but let it be remembered, that in all human undertakings of a complex nature, much must be left to the influence of things out of the power of man to govern: and in this respect, this scheme partakes only of the common and unavoidable lot of other things in nature; we see some certainty of success, which  
may

may introduce many unforeseen events that may be favourable ; to the timid all novelty is irksome ; it is our nature to be bold and careless in the pursuit of improper measures ; but to be keen sighted in finding impediments when it is our business to do good.

A reduction in the poor rates would certainly attend this measure ; from these small diffusions of property much good would arise ; the mind that has some portion of property to employ itself upon, is not destitute of hope ; the reflections this would produce, give birth to what we call the dignity of mind, which sets one man above another in his own opinion : for want of this assistance it is, that the mind of the slave has no texture, is versatile, and incapable of attachment to any thing ; but make him free, and give him a rood of land, and you create a man ; then the rains appear to him descending to increase his store ; when the sun shines, he considers himself as the object of its influence, that its rays are so diverged, that they may bear upon his little field : these thoughts strengthen his piety, and purify his morals ; and thus our husbandman in his new establishment, having better things to look at, will soon lose sight of poor-houses and dependance on the parish.

Some may think that the Laws already provided in behalf of the Husbandmen are sufficient if well attended to, it must be acknowledged that  
many



many Laws have been framed with the best intent, some of which have been found inapplicable, and some inadequate to the purposes, for it is in the essence of human foresight, to be always right in theory, and very often wrong in practice.

It is with pleasure that I observe that the Parliament is particularly favorable to all applications for the relief of distress, in all orders of the state ; and as it is so much the interest of Government to cherish this class of men, it cannot be doubted but it will stretch out its generous assistance to them.

In corporate bodies that have the management of estates granted for the relief of the poor, the letting of land might have this object in view, as the best method of fulfilling the good intention of the donor ; if this scheme should succeed, societies of the wealthy may arise, to assist the adventurers with small sums, without interest.

Part of the rent might, at the will of the landlord, be paid in the produce of the land, which in some cases might be commodious to both parties.

It might perhaps be good policy, that the man who had three children, should have an allowance on the birth of a fourth, and so on, till the child was of age to be instructed by the overseer, to earn its maintenance.

It would not be necessary to build many cottages if the owners of the lands abutting upon those standing, could be induced to spare as much land

as was requisite, for its being close to the house enhances the benefit very much.

However commodious it may be to the owners of great estates, to have few and opulent tenants for their farms, the interest of the State is the victim to it; and this is very obvious, for the necessities of the small farmers send them to market, and many sellers reduce the prices of all commodities; it is an axiom in the political œconomy of nations, that the cultivators of the land should not be rich, which small farms will always prevent.

Commons which now make an appearance almost impertinent, were of great use when a numerous yeomanry existed, and the husbandman had money in his purse to purchase a heifer, or a colt and geese; and perhaps it deserves more observation than is now bestowed on the reasons for inclosing them; they may again be wanted, when property shall again be broken into small parts, which must inevitably happen by design, or the work of time and chance, before good can much predominate, and the nation be said to be under the best possible regulation.

The great towns have the example of Shrewsbury and some other places, of which if they avail themselves, with activity and zeal, will lower their poor rates; but which if they continue to neglect, it cannot affect the happiness of thousands, as what relates to villages does; in towns  
where

where the poor rates are very high, the rents of the houses are proportionably low.

I shall mention a circumstance which has done more to raise the price of provisions than any other; it was the custom formerly for the most respectable persons in every town to go to market, to provide for their family; the appearance of the magistrates amongst the rest, kept the sellers in some sort of awe, and created at the same time a respect for their own characters as fair dealers; since the marketing has been turned over to servants, who from the carelessness frequent in their present manners, are rather averse from the interests of those who employ them, there remains no check to the exorbitant demands of those who are knavishly inclined; for this there is no remedy, but to revert to the old practice.

The increase of London is another cause of the dearth of provisions, in all places within the circuit of an hundred miles; but who can prevent it?

A Gentleman in Norfolk not long since, built some cottages; and favoured his tenants with a portion of land to each, which produced the benefits I contend for, to the individuals; this led me to consider his project as to a more extensive application, and I am well warranted in asserting, that the practice cannot be too general, both as to public and private good; it is difficult in the political moral world to do good, without some  
injustice,

to injustice; but the operation of this, will be so gentle, as not to amount to an inconvenience to any; and to those who have a taste that way, it will exhibit a pleasing variety of objects, ornamental to the rural scenery.

I have the Honour to be,

SIR,

Your most Obedient,

Humble Servant,

*A Gentleman of Suffolk.*

